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SUBJECT: TURKISH MEDIA REACTION  
MONDAY, JANUARY 4, 2010

Media Highlights: US Opens Third Front in Yemen - New TSA  
regulations Seen as Anti Muslim; Erdogan on EU and Opening Halki  
Seminary; Cosmic Search Continues at TGS; Turkish Ambassadors'  
Conference; FM Lieberman-Ambassador Levy; TV Spotlight

US Embassy Ankara - Turkey Media Reaction - January 4, 2010 as  
prepared by the Public Affairs Information Office

How the US is Playing

US Opens Third Front in Yemen: In "US Plans to Eat Yemen,"  
Islamist-oriented Yeni Safak on 1/3 described the American-British  
"third front" in the war against terror, noting that the foiled  
attack in Detroit is an "excuse" to take action in Yemen. Turkish  
media zero in on the "third front" theme, accompanied by mostly  
negative reaction to TSA's new regulations against travelers from 14  
countries in the Middle East as anti-Muslim. Mainstream Sabah  
headlines "Third Front Against Al Qaeda," emphasizing that President  
Obama for the first time has blamed Al Qaeda for attacking a US  
airliner, while liberal Radikal notes in "Tensions Rise Over Yemen  
Issue," that the US and Britain are "closing their embassies in  
Yemen over emerging terrorist threats." Islamist-oriented Zaman  
gives prominent play to the CBS TV report that claims the US  
directed the 17-24 December operation in Yemen and has agreed with  
Britain to fund a special counter-terrorism unit in Yemen "to  
prevent Al Qaida from taking over the country as a safe haven." In  
"Security vs. Privacy," mainstream Hurriyet takes an in-depth look  
at full body sweeps, noting that "many countries did not want to put  
full body scanner in use due to violations of privacy as well as  
high doses of radiation, but in the aftermath of airline bomber this  
reasoning is almost gone." Meanwhile, several Turkish columnists  
express worry over the new security measures because of they seem  
sure to provoke prejudice against Muslims. In mainstream Milliyet  
Semih Idiz observes "a growing anti-Muslim sentiment within the  
Western world" and that the new measures "will only make it more  
impossible for Muslim travelers, especially women, to go to the US  
and European destinations." Islamist Zaman's Ali Aslan opines that  
President Obama being forced to get tough on security "is a victory  
for those who provoke security paranoia in the US."

In the Headlines

Erdogan on Turkey's EU Accession and "Our Condition for Halki Seminary is Western Thrace" (Milliyet)

Today's papers give extensive front page coverage to PM Erdogan's interview with liberal Radikal's "Kriter" magazine. In "Turkey Has Not Lost Its Zeal for EU Accession," Radikal plays up Erdogan's views that negative comments by EU leaders about Turkey's accession is "rocking the confidence of the Turkish people in the EU process." Mainstream Sabah headlines "European Leaders Discourage Us" and reports that during the interview, PM Erdogan emphasized that there was no loss of enthusiasm in Turkey's EU bid. Regarding the Halki Seminary, Mainstream Milliyet emphasizes that Erdogan notes "Turkish government is working on the re-opening of Halki Seminary. However, demands of the Turkish minority living in Western Thrace should be taken into account while dealing with re-opening of Halki Seminary process."

Sixth Search in Cosmic-Room

Cumhuriyet, Zaman, Sabah, Milliyet, Yeni Safak and others report today that judge Kadir Kayan entered the cosmic room at the Special Forces Command in Ankara one more time and conducted a search yesterday. Sabah notes that the General Staff's demand for the termination of the search and destruction of the records was delivered to the relevant court after office hours on December 31, therefore, the process of the demand was left for today. Islamist-oriented Zaman says that the the continuation of the search shows that the procedure is perfectly legal. Regarding the latest happenings in Ankara, Milliyet questions the 10 newspapers' Ankara representatives by saying "What is happening in Ankara?" Responses of the Ankara reps show that while mainstream media express concern

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about the tiff between the state institutions, the pro-government media commented positively on the developments and described all developments as a sign for democratization.

In a related story, Milliyet columnist Asli Aydintasbas says foreign observers described the decreasing influence of the military in Turkish politics as an "irreversible" process. The writer notes that the foreign world acts on the assumption that the Turkish army would not be able to regain its previous power on the political arena.

200 Turkish Ambassadors to Gather in Ankara

Papers report that some 200 Turkish ambassadors posted around the world will gather in Ankara to discuss Turkey's foreign policy in 2010. Foreign Minister Davutoglu will deliver the opening remarks of the conference to be held on Monday. The ambassadors and Davutoglu will move on to the city of Mardin over the weekend to wrap up the discussions.

Lieberman Lashes Out at Israel's Ambassador in Turkey

All papers cite the Jerusalem Post reporting Israeli Foreign Minister Avigdor Lieberman lashed out at the Israeli ambassadors around the world for "over-identifying" with their host countries. "We should end the period of placing ourselves at a lower position. I saw that some of the ambassadors have identified themselves so much with their host countries to the extent that they started to support the points of those countries," Lieberman reportedly said. According to the Jerusalem Post, Lieberman's criticism was in reference to the Israeli Ambassador to Ankara Gaby Levy. Mainstream Aksam recalls that Levy, who was born in Turkey, had earlier said regarding the tensions with Turkey that Israel, too, might have made some mistakes.

TV Spotlight

On January 5, President Gul will host a luncheon for the heads of the legislative, the executive and the judiciary on the occasion of the New Year.

Foreign Minister Davutoglu met Saudi Arabia's King Abdullah on Sunday to discuss the steps for combating Islamophobia.

Religious affairs directorate Diyanet head Ali Bardakoglu says minorities in Turkey face no problems in training their clerics, and

that problems regarding the Halki Seminary must be resolved within the framework of religious freedoms.

Ten Turkish citizens were detained by the Iranian security forces when they entered Iran using Esendere bordergate in Hakkari, over charges of smuggling oil.

Turkish exports for 2009 are expected to surpass USD 100 billion.

The Afghan parliament has rejected two-thirds of the ministers nominated by President Hamid Karzai.

JEFFREY